3:Will and Spinden E-5 (1905) 1906
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778 which Lewis and Clarke, Henry, Catlin, and Maximilian all give
787 accounts. The Mandans told Lewis and Clarke that this rock, which was at three days march to the southwest, informed them of every thing to happen during the year and that they visited it every spring and sometimes in the summers.[1] The description which Maximilian gives of this rock seems worth repetition: "It is situated at two or three days from the village on the edge of the Cannonball River from which it is about one hundred paces. They say it is on the summit of a rather high hill, the top of which is level. It is marked by the footprints of men and other animals, dogs and travois. It is a sort of oracle. They offer it all sorts of valuable articles — knives, pipes, cloth. . . . When going to war they pass near and consult the stone. They approach it, weep, groan, smoke, and retire to a distance where they pass the night. Next day they take down on parchment what the stone shows. This painted parchment is carried to the village where the old men interpret it. Undoubtedly new figures are seen on the stone from time to time.' Not far from this place was the ark where part of the nation was saved." The Minnetarees also had one of these medicine stones which was consulted in practically the same way. One more of their natural sacred objects deserves
778 mention; this was a lake some distance from their villages
782 where a great serpent, formerly a Mandan warrior, was said to reside. This serpent was a good genius and offerings of all sorts were thrown into the lake to procure his aid.

791 The shaman although mentioned occasionally is not described, nor are his powers well defined by any of the authorities. Maximilian remarked that there were shamans who gathered herbs and pretended to cure diseases and others who did tricks and conducted preparations for the ceremonies.

773 MYTHOLOGY:—Practically all material on Mandan mythology
539 comes from Maximilian who wrote down a large number of stories directly as they were told to him by a Mandan chief, Dipeuch. Catlin and Lewis and Clarke reinforce these with a few details. It is found by analysis of the myths given by Maximilian that two distinct, parallel, mythological stories of

[1] Lewis and Clarke: Feb. 21, 1805.

6: Wied-Neuwied T-5 (1832-1834) 1843 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

This custom exists among most of the nations on the Missouri, and even among the Esquimaux there is a somewhat similar usage. If the adopted son and father have not happened to meet for a long time, they make presents to each other; the father gives the son a new dress, and the latter presents him with a good horse. Among all the Indian nations of North America, there is a particular class of men, who are specially engaged in all the above-mentioned ceremonies and medicines. They are, also, the physicians, and are called, among the Mandans, Numak-Choppenih, which signifies medicine man.

The skin of a white buffalo cow is an important article, and an eminent medicine in the opinion of the Mandans and Manitaries. He who has never possessed one of them is not respected. Suppose two men to be disputing about their exploits, the one an old veteran warrior, who has slain many enemies, the other, a young lad without experience; the latter reproaches the other with never having possessed a white buffalo cow hide, on which the old man droops his head, and covers his face for shame. He who possesses such a hide generally offers it to the lord of life, to whom he dedicates it, or, which is equivalent, to the sun, or to the first man. He collects, perhaps, in the course of a whole twelvemonth, various articles of value, and then hangs them up all together on a high pole in the open prairie, generally in the neighbourhood of the burying-place, or in the village before his hut. Distinguished men and chiefs of eminence are for the most part poor, because, in order to gain reputation and influence, they give away everything of value which they possess. A large number of relatives is one of the chief means of acquiring riches, for a young man who wishes to distinguish himself, and to be liberal, does honour to the whole family, who assist him to the utmost of their power. When one of his relations has anything of value, the young man goes to the owner to demand it, and not unfrequently takes it away without ceremony. Sometimes he hangs his head in silence, and then something of value is given him, a handsome dress, a horse, &c. If he wishes to gain reputation and a claim to distinction, it is necessary that he should make presents. All the people in the village notice very accurately what presents are made, and the donor has a right to display all such presents painted on his robes, and in this manner to hand down his reputation to posterity, as has been already related. This and military glory are, in the eyes of these men, the greatest virtues. They dare not draw a stroke too much on their robes for the horses, guns, &c., which they have given away, for the young men keep a most strict account against each other, and universal ridicule would be the immediate consequence of violating this rule. Among the distinctions of any man, the white buffalo hide is the greatest. He who has not been so fortunate as to kill a white buffalo himself, which is generally the case, as these animals are very rare, purchases a hide, often at a great distance from home, and other nations bring them hither, being well aware of the great value attached to them by the Mandans. The hide must be that of a young cow, not above two years old, and be taken off complete and tanned, with the horns,

7: Catlin R, E-5 (1832-1840) 1857
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and so they continued to pass the pipe around until the portrait was completed. 123

In this way I progressed with my portraits, stopping occasionally very suddenly as if something was wrong, and taking a tremendous puff or two at the pipe, and streaming the smoke through my nostrils, exhibiting in my looks and actions an evident relief; enabling me to proceed with more facility and success,—by flattering and complimenting each one on his good looks after I had got it done, and taking them according to rank, or standing, making it a matter of honour with them, which pleased them exceedingly, and gave me and my art the stamp of respectability at once.

I was then taken by the arm by the chiefs, and led to their lodges, where feasts were prepared for me in elegant style, *i. e.* in the best manner which this country affords; and being led by the arm, and welcomed to them by *gentlemen* of high and exalted feelings, rendered them in my estimation truly elegant.

I was waited upon in due form and ceremony by the *medicine-men*, who received me upon the old adage, "Similis simili gaudet." I was invited to a feast, and they presented me a *she-shee-quoi*, or a doctor's rattle, and also a magical wand, or a doctor's staff, strung with claws of the grizzly bear, with hoofs of the antelope—with ermine—with wild sage and bat's wings—and perfumed withal with the *choice* and *savoury* odour of the pole-cat—a dog was sacrificed and hung by the legs over my wigwam, and I was therefore and thereby initiated into (and countenanced in the practice of) the arcana of medicine or mystery, and considered a Fellow of the Extraordinary Society of *Conjurati*. 123 791

Since this signal success and good fortune in my operations, things have gone on very pleasantly, and I have had a great deal of amusement. Some altercation has taken place, however, amongst the chiefs and braves, with regard to standing or rank, of which they are exceedingly jealous; and they must sit (if at all) in regular order, according to that rank; the trouble is all settled at last, however, and I have had no want of subjects, though a great many have become again alarmed, and are unwilling to sit, for fear, as some say, that they will die prematurely if painted; and as others say, that if they are painted, the picture will live after they are dead, and they cannot sleep quiet in their graves. 123 774

I have had several most remarkable occurrences in my painting-room, of this kind, which have made me some everlasting enemies here; though the minds and feelings of the chiefs and medicine-men have not been affected by them. There has been three or four instances where proud and aspiring young men have been in my lodge, and after gazing at the portraits of the head chief across the room (which sits looking them in the eyes), have raised their hands before their faces and walked around to the side of the lodge, on the right or left, from whence to take a long and fair side-look at the chief, instead of staring him full in the face (which is a most unpardonable offence

7: Catlin R. E-5 (1832-1840) 1857
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123 774 in all Indian tribes); and after having got in that position, and cast their eyes again upon the portrait which was yet looking them full in the face, have thrown their robes over their heads and bolted out of the wigwam, filled equally with astonishment and indignation; averring, as they always will in a sullen mood, that they "saw the eyes move,"—that as they walked around the room "the eyes of the portrait followed them." With these unfortunate gentlemen, repeated efforts have been made by the Traders, and also by the chiefs and doctors, who understand the illusion, to convince them of their error, by explaining the mystery; but they will not hear to any explanation whatever; saying, that "what they see with their eyes is always evidence enough for them;" that they always "believe their own eyes sooner than a hundred tongues," and all efforts to get them a second time to my room, or into my company in any place, have proved entirely unsuccessful.

123 791 I had trouble brewing also the other day from another source; one of the "*medicines*" commenced howling and haranguing around my domicil, amongst the throng that was outside, proclaiming that all who were inside and being painted were fools and would soon die; and very materially affecting thereby my popularity. I however sent for him and called him in the next morning, when I was alone, having only the interpreter with me; telling him that I had had my eye upon him for several days, and had been so well pleased with his looks, that I had taken great pains to find out his history, which had been explained by all as one of a most extraordinary kind, and his character and standing in his tribe as worthy of my particular notice; and that I had several days since resolved that as soon as I had practiced my hand long enough upon the others, to get the stiffness out of it (after paddling my canoe so far as I had) and make it to work easily and successfully, I would begin on his portrait, which I was then prepared to commence on that day, and that I felt as if I could do him justice. He shook me by the hand, giving me the "Doctor's grip," and beckoned me to sit down, which I did, and we smoked a pipe together. After this was over, he told me, that "he had no inimical feelings towards me, although he had been telling the chiefs that they were all fools, and all would die who had their portraits painted—that although he had set the old women and children all crying, and even made some of the young warriors tremble, yet he had no unfriendly feelings towards me, nor any fear or dread of my art." "I know you are a good man (said he), I know you will do no harm to any one, your medicine is great and you are a great 'medicine-man.' I would like to see myself very well—and so would all of the chiefs; but they have all been many days in this medicine-house, and they all know me well, and they have not asked me to come in and be *made alive* with paints—my friend, I am glad that my people have told you who I am—my heart is glad—I will go to my wigwam and eat, and in a little while I will come, and you may go to work;"—another pipe was lit and smoked, and he got up and went off. I prepared my canvas and pa-

7: Catlin R, E-5 (1832-1840) 1857
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lette, and whistled away the time until twelve o'clock, before he made his appearance; having used the whole of the fore-part of the day at his toilette, arranging his dress and ornamenting his body for his picture.

At that hour then, bedaubed and streaked with paints of various colours, with bear's grease and charcoal, with medicine-pipes in his hands and foxes tails attached to his heels, entered Mah-to-he-hah (the old bear, PLATE 55), with a train of his own profession, who seated themselves around him; and also a number of boys, whom it was requested should remain with him, and whom I supposed it possible might have been pupils, whom he was instructing in the mysteries of *materia medica* and *hoca poca*. He took his position in the middle of the room, waving his eagle calumets in each hand, and singing his medicine-song which he sings over his dying patient, looking me full in the face until I completed his picture, which I painted at full length. His vanity has been completely gratified in the operation; he lies for hours together, day after day, in my room, in front of his picture, gazing intensely upon it; lights my pipe for me while I am painting—shakes hands with me a dozen times on each day, and talks of me, and enlarges upon my *medicine* virtues and my talents, wherever he goes; so that this new difficulty is now removed, and instead of preaching against me, he is one of my strongest and most enthusiastic friends and aids in the country.

There is yet to be described another sort of personage, that is often seen stalking about in all Indian communities, a kind of nondescript, with whom I have been somewhat annoyed, and still more amused, since I came to this village, of whom (or of *which*) I shall give some account in my next epistle.